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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE April 5, 2019

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Indian Affairs Secretary Commends Governor Lujan Grisham on Signing Legislation that Directly Impacts Tribal Communities

SANTA FE - New Mexico Indian Affairs Department Cabinet Secretary Lynn Trujillo on Friday commended Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham for signing into law several bills that directly impact tribal communities, including, Senate Bill 407 – Lottery Funds for Tribal Colleges, House Bill 278 – Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, and Senate Bill 313 – Tribal Judges in Judicial Education Center. “Thank you to the legislators for their leadership and work ensuring that the needs and issues of tribal communities are addressed,” said Secretary Trujillo.

Senate Bill 407, sponsored by Senator Benny Shendo, Jr. (D-Jemez Pueblo) amends the Legislative Lottery Tuition Scholarship Act to allow accredited tribal colleges to receive funds from the Lottery Tuition Fund, allowing students who attend tribal colleges to receive lottery scholarships. Students at Navajo Technical University, Diné College and the Institute for American Indian Arts will benefit. Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, a Bureau of Indian Education school, does not charge tuition.

"We are extremely grateful to Representative Alcon and Senator Shendo, sponsors of the House and Senate companion bills; and the New Mexico Legislature and Governor Lujan Grisham for their support of this historic legislation that enables students attending IAIA and the other tribal colleges to access the Lottery Scholarship Fund," said IAIA President Dr. Robert Martin. "This will dramatically improve access to higher education for Native students by expanding their options to include tribal colleges in their home communities that offer opportunities to study programs incorporating an Indigenous perspective."

House Bill 278, sponsored by Representative Andrea Romero (D-Santa Fe), Representative Derrick Lente (D-Sandia Pueblo), Representative Melanie A. Stansbury (D-Bernalillo), and Representative D. Wonda Johnson (D-Navajo Nation) creates a task force chaired by the Secretary of Indian Affairs Department to study and determine how to increase state resources for reporting and identifying missing and murdered Indigenous women in the state. This task force will be the first of its kind for the state and its membership will consist of state and federal officials, tribal members and advocates, who will collaborate with federal and tribal law enforcement agencies.

Senate Bill 313, sponsored by Senator Jacob Candelaria (D-Bernalillo), and Senator Benny Shendo, Jr. (D-Jemez Pueblo) authorizes the New Mexico Judicial Education Center to offer educational programs to tribal judges working in the state and municipal court system.

"This legislation strengthens the government-to-government relationship between state and tribal courts," said Senator Jacob Candelaria. "By authorizing the Supreme Court to provide continuing judicial education

services to tribal judges, we create a collaborate framework to facilitate knowledge exchange and professional development of both state and tribal judges. I believe this bill will also help educate our state judiciary on tribal law and legal systems, better equipping the state legal system to respect and honor tribal sovereignty."

"This was an exciting and productive session. We accomplished a lot for our tribal communities. I look forward to the work to come," Representative Georgene Louis (D-Acoma Pueblo) said.

Additional signed legislation that directly impacts New Mexico tribal communities includes:

House Bill 5/Senate Bill 1 – Public Education Changes

Sponsored by: Representative Sheryl Williams Stapleton (D-Bernalillo), Representative Patricia A. Lundstrom (D-Gallup), Representative Christine Trujillo (D-Bernalillo), Representative G. Andrés Romero (D-Bernalillo), Representative Roberto “Bobby” Gonzales (D-Taos), Senator Mimi Stewart (D-Bernalillo), Senator Gay G. Kernan (R-Hobbs), and Senator William Soules (D-Las Cruces)

House Bill 111 – Cultural & Linguistic Education

Sponsored by: Representative Tomás E. Salazar (D-Las Vegas), Representative Linda M. Trujillo (D-Santa Fe), and Representative Derrick Lente (D-Sandia Pueblo)

House Bill 250 – Native American Student Needs Assessments

Sponsored by: Representative Derrick Lente (D-Sandia Pueblo)

Senate Bill 22 – Early Childhood Education and Care Department

Sponsored by: Senator Michael Padilla (D-Bernalillo) and Representative Linda M. Trujillo (D-Santa Fe)

House Memorial 51 – Tribal Customary Adoption

Sponsored by: Representative Georgene Louis (D-Acoma Pueblo) and Representative D. Wonda Johnson (D-Navajo Nation)

House Bill 137 – County & Tribal Health Councils Act

Sponsored by: Representative Anthony Allison (D-Navajo Nation) and Representative Elizabeth Thomson (D-Bernalillo)

House Bill 149 – Juvenile Delinquency Notice to Tribes

Sponsored by: Representative Georgene Louis (D-Acoma Pueblo)

House Bill 100 – Replaces Columbus Day as Indigenous Peoples’ Day

Sponsored by: Representative Derrick Lente (D-Sandia Pueblo) and Representative Andrea Romero (D-Santa Fe)

Senate Bill 489 – Energy Transition Act

Sponsored by: Senator Jacob Candelaria (D-Bernalillo), Representative Nathan P. Small (D- Las Cruces), Senator Mimi Stewart (D-Bernalillo), Representative Patricia Roybal Caballero (D-Bernalillo), and Representative Brian Egolf (D-Santa Fe)

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